

REPORT

ON

NATIVE PAPERS IN BENGAL

FOR THE

Week ending the 16th January 1904.

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II.—HOME ADMINISTRATION.

(a)—Police.

THE name of Daroga Mahabbat Ulla, says the *Suhrid* [Noakhali] of the

Mahabbat Ulla, a Sub-Inspector of the Noakhali thana.

4th January, is known to every inhabitant of the Noakhali district. It was he who, when at the Ramganj thana, was charged with having committed

outrage upon a beautiful young woman and, although acquitted, suffered departmental punishment, as a result of which his promotion was stopped for one year, and he was degraded and transferred to the Sadar thana as a Junior Sub-Inspector. But even in the Sadar thana his evil and oppressive propensities appear to have got the better of him. On the afternoon of the 2nd January last one of his servants, who was not recognised at the time, was seen prowling behind a number of shops, and as incendiarism prevailed in the town, a respectable man asked the shopkeepers to see if he was not a thief. This enraged the daroga's servant, who hastened to his master and returned with the latter's authority to shower abuses on the respectable man. The gentleman heard the abusive language that was used against him and went to the daroga to complain against his servant. The daroga heard everything, but said nothing to the accused who, even in his master's presence, behaved insolently towards the complainant. The daroga afterwards light-heartedly asked the gentleman for a paper which he had demanded from him some time before, and in which that police officer was interested. This showed that the daroga had the gentleman insulted on account of the latter having withheld the paper from him. The daroga is loved by many Inspectors, and is supported by the Musalman District Superintendent of Police. It is therefore almost impossible to get justice in a complaint against him. The editor himself fears the displeasure of the daroga, but he has faith in the honesty of his purpose and the justice of the British Government.

SUHRID,
Jan. 4th, 1904.

2. A correspondent from Jamna writes to the *Pallivasi* [Kalna] of the 6th January that the chaukidari-tax is an intolerable burden on the people of the country, most of whom are so poor that they can hardly manage to

The oppressiveness of the chaukidari-tax.

earn their livelihood. It was a great mistake on the part of Government to deprive the chaukidars of their *chakran* lands. If Government could revive the ancient system by returning to the chaukidars their *chakran* lands, and pay them a salary of one rupee per month in addition, they would be willing servants of the public, and the people would be saved much hardship and oppression.

PALLIVASI,
Jan. 6th, 1904.

3. The *Mihir-o-Sudhakar* [Calcutta] of the 8th January draws the attention of the Commissioner of Police, Calcutta, to the exhibition of obscene pictures in shops in Tiretta Bazar. The practice is certainly illegal and should be at once put a stop to.

MIHIR-O-SUDHAKAR
Jan. 8th, 1904.

Exhibition of obscene pictures in Tiretta Bazar.

4. A correspondent writes to the same paper as follows:—

MIHIR-O-SUDHAKAR.

Babu Girindra Chandra Mukerji, District Superintendent of Police, Mymensingh.

The following instances will show how tyrannical Babu Girindra Chandra Mukerji, District Superintendent of Police, Mymensingh, is towards his Muhammadan subordinates:—

(1) Abdul Wahed, a first-class constable of 33 years' service, and an old man, after a stay of some months in hospital, applied for leave on medical certificate, which was given him by the Civil Surgeon. The District Superintendent, instead of granting him leave, got him transferred to Howrah.

(2) Abul Hossein, after passing the Entrance Examination, was appointed as a writer constable. Though he has been serving for a long time, he has not been promoted, simply because he is a Muhammadan. But another constable, named Purnasasi, was made head-constable in a short time. Abul Hossein appealed against this injustice and thus incurred the dire displeasure of the District Superintendent. He was then transferred to the Police lines, and when he applied for leave to appear at the Police Sub-Inspector-

ship Examination, the District Superintendent maliciously put him on special duty, which writer-constables were never before required to perform.

(3) Mohasin Ali Khan, an able head-constable, was on his return from leave transferred to Badla. But the District Superintendent did not allow him the boat allowance at the rate of Rs. 15 per month granted to all Sub-Inspectors and head-constables, simply because he was a Muhammadan. After some days he was wounded by thieves and sent to hospital for treatment. But just at this time he was transferred to another place, so that he might not conduct the theft case. But the thieves were convicted and punished. The result was probably distasteful to the District Superintendent who, without any cause whatever, degraded Mohasin Ali Khan.

HITAVADI,
Jan. 8th, 1904.

5. A correspondent of the *Hitavadi* [Calcutta] of the 8th January speaks of the prevalence of piracy on the Hooghly between Balirkhal and Ballavpur. Armed bands of pirates attack merchant boats and carry away everything they find in them. The river-borne trade of the traders of Seoraphuli is at a standstill on account of this. The local police is quite indifferent to the matter.

(b) — Working of the Courts

HITAVARTA,
Jan 3rd, 1904

Babu Sarada Charan Mitra recommended for a High Court Judgeship.

6. The *Hitavarta* [Calcutta] of the 3rd January hopes that Babu Sarada Charan Mitra will be appointed to a Judgeship of the Calcutta High Court in the place of Mr. Justice Guru Das Banerji, who is going to retire. Sarada Babu has already acted as a Judge and discharged his duties to the entire satisfaction of the public. If he be appointed permanently, he will surely make a good Judge, and will not be found inferior to Justice Guru Das Banerji either in social or judicial qualities.

BIKAS,
Jan. 5th, 1904.

The proposed appointment of an Additional Judge in Barisal

7. Referring to the proposal to appoint a permanent Additional Judge in the Backergunge district, the *Bikas* [Barisal] of the 5th January says that if Mr. Justice Pratt, after holding a local inspection in this connection has, as it is rumoured, arrived at the conclusion that the proposal is not justified by actual facts, then he must be regarded as having arrived at the right conclusion. The Additional Judge is required, if he is required at all, for the purpose of relieving Mr. Temple, the District Judge, of a portion of his duties, for it is believed that Munsifs and Sub-Judges seldom keep their files heavy. There is no ground for believing that the judicial work of the district has increased in any appreciable degree since Mr. Temple first took charge of it. But if he himself thinks otherwise, he may get himself transferred to a smaller district and there enjoy the rest and relief which he desires to have. It can be proved that Mr. Temple does not properly perform his duties, and that under him the Civil Courts in the district have been extremely mismanaged. The writer has more than once tried to draw his notice to the mismanagement of the Sadar offices under him, but to no effect. As for the pressure of law-suits, it is so light that the Additional Judge who is now working temporarily at Barisal, has often to remark in his diary, "No more work available." It may be confidently said that if an able and industrious Judge is placed at the helm of the judicial administration of the district, there will no longer remain any necessity for appointing an Additional Judge in it.

MIHIR-O-SUDHAKAR,
Jan. 8th, 1904.

The *Id* holiday disallowed by the District Magistrate of Noakhali.

8. The *Mihir-o-Sudhakar* [Calcutta] of the 8th January complains that Mr. B. C. Sen, the Hindu Magistrate of Noakhali, did not grant a holiday on the occasion of the last *Id*, although under Government Notification No. 5978 Mis., dated the 22nd December 1902, the holiday ought to have been granted. It may easily be understood how seriously inconvenienced the Muhammadan litigants, pleaders, and mukhtears of Noakhali were by this action of the Magistrate. Was it for the purpose of repressing the Muhammadans that the Magistrate refused to grant the holiday? Any ignorance of the above notification on the part of the Magistrate, even if it were possible to make such a supposition, would be no sufficient justification for disallowing

such an important privilege connected with the religious observances of the people.

9. The *Mahima* [Calcutta] of the 8th January writes that a Kabuli instituted a suit in the Serampore Court against Babu Ramkumar Ghosh, an inhabitant of Singur near Tarakeswar, claiming Rs. 500 alleged to have been borrowed by him from the Kabuli. Babu Ramkumar is a well-to-do man and he succeeded in proving to the satisfaction of the Court that the hand-note produced by the Kabuli was not genuine. The result was that the suit was dismissed with costs. But if a poor man had been thus placed, he would have fared very miserably. The authorities should closely watch the doings of the Kabulis.

MAHIMA,
Jan. 8th, 1904.

10. It is rumoured, says the *Howrah Hitaishi* [Howrah] of the 9th January, that illegal exactions are regularly made from people in the Serampore Sub-Registry office. The rumour implicates even the Sub-Registrar in the matter.

HOWRAH HITAISHI,
Jan 9th, 1904.

Rumoured illegal exactions in the Serampore Sub-Registry office.

11. The *Rangalay* [Calcutta] of the 10th January writes as follows :—

RANGALAY,
Jan. 10th, 1904.

We do not know, nor do we care to know, whether Tilak is guilty or innocent. We have no faith in convictions by English law-Courts. We know that, thanks to English laws, falsehood prevails to a very great extent in those Courts and there has sprung up in the country a class of professional witnesses. No man can speak the truth in a law-Court, for if he does he is sure to be proved a liar in his cross-examination. Tilak has many enemies, and what good man has not in these days? The desire of getting up a case against Tilak and thereby getting him convicted is present in many hearts. Who knows whether the present case against Tilak is true or false? The case is not also at all clear to us either in its origin or in its upshot. We are not therefore prepared to hate or pity Tilak as a criminal.

Whatever may be the reason, Bala Gangadhar Tilak is an object of veneration to all Indians. His name is familiar to all educated Indians and he is respected by everybody. In the land of Maharashtra he is accorded divine honours. He is a Brahmin, a man of learning, independence and action, kind-hearted, benevolent and a friend of the poor. He is a lover of his countrymen and a protector of his society and his religion. Who is there like him? In whom else shall we meet with firmness and independence such as his? Why should this Tilak—an object of love, admiration, pride, glory, veneration and worship as he is—go to jail so often like a common felon? Why should the net of laws and law-Courts be spread in this way with a view to punish him? Tilak an enemy to the English Government whose power makes the whole earth constantly quake with fear and whose rigorous rule makes the 300 millions of Hindus and Musalmans stand before it speechless and stupefied with heads bowed down! For shame! Do not entertain that notion even for a moment. To suppose this is to call Englishmen cowards and to proclaim the foundations of British rule as weak and unstable. What! Tilak to loose the shackles of the Indian administration—of a power whose lightest word is enough to throw the whole world into a commotion! You might much better imagine the dwarf as capable of catching the moon, the cripple as able to scale mountains, the blind as able to see! Indeed, all these suppositions would be far less absurd than that it is possible for Tilak to weaken British ascendancy in India. By contemplating such a possibility the Englishman has given evidence of the weakness of his heart and of his intellect and inspired the wicked with hopes.

But then we should take note of one political consideration. It is a maxim of a crooked policy to crush the man who is an object of popular adoration and whose hints are obeyed by a whole province. From this point of view, the attempt of the English Government to crush Tilak must be pronounced truly statesmanlike. But then every Hindu in India has come to know that their Tilak is this time in great danger of being brought down to the dust. Such an idea in the public mind is not good for the Government. That Government alone need fear an intelligent, independent and energetic subject in whose policy there is ingrained a wicked wiliness. But why should the English Government fear such a subject? Cannot the English Government, if it chooses, attach Tilak to itself?

Who is it that has made Tilak so great? Must not the answer to this be—the English Government? It is that Government which has made Tilak familiar to the educated community. If it now seeks to humble, disgrace and harass him it will be earning infamy. It evinced a base cowardice to lead Tilak to prison bound and hand-cuffed like a common felon. Tilak is no ferocious rebel, no Hercules, no frantic murderer, no wicked hypocrite, no cowardly cutpurse that he needed to be taken to prison bound and with hand-cuffs on. Is not the English Government sowing the seeds of discontent in the mind of us all by unnecessarily harassing Tilak? If you must kill, kill outright. You have soldiers, shot, and the gallows. You are indeed in no want of destructive apparatus. Why not then kill Tilak? That would put an end to your uneasiness and our torture.

Why should there be this *Tilak* (an ornamental mark) of sandal-paste on the foreheads of those whose heads now lie all low and trampled upon in dust? Forget then, O Indians! forget Bala Gangadhar Tilak; forget, O Hindus of India, Tilak, the head of the Brahmin caste; forget, O zealous Hindus, Tilak, the observer of his religion and the servant of his society; forget, O educated Indians, the wise, the accomplished, and the learned Tilak—Tilak who is proficient in the *sastras*; forget, O politicians, Tilak, the man of action and friend of the poor.

Lord Curzon is an intelligent statesman. He is a generous and independent ruler, who loves the people as well as glory. We can cry to him and he will listen to our cry. India has no man, no son worth speaking of, but this Bala Gangadhar Tilak. Do not crush to the earth this darling child of the unfortunate mother. Release Bala Gangadhar Tilak, the sole child of her house and heart, her one broken staff of hope. You are a king of kings, and the victor as well as protector of the world. Restore to the beggar-woman at your gate her cake of sand, the one piece of burnt wood still lying unconsumed in that vast cremation ground, India. We pray you on our knees and with joined hands—forgetting our high and ancient Brahmin pride—harass not Bala Gangadhar Tilak any more. Be he thief, villain or forger, he is still our own. Restore to us our own—restore to us our Tilak, and you will vanquish all foes on earth and your prosperity will be permanent.

(c)—*Jails.*

BIKAS,
Jan. 5th, 1904.

12. The *Bikas* [Barisal] of the 5th January says that the Barisal Jail has become a great nuisance to the inhabitants of the town on account of the arbitrary proceedings of the jail authorities. Two of the drains in the jail are connected with the *khal* which flows by its side. The sewage which is discharged into the *khal* by these drains contaminates its water, and every year cholera makes its appearance first of all among those people who live on its banks. But the jail authorities would not allow these drains to be disconnected with the *khal*, and the local Municipal Corporation is not strong enough to enforce its regulations against them. The jail tank, which was reserved by the Municipality solely for the purpose of supplying drinking-water, has been made filthy and its water unwholesome by the jail people. Every winter the jail authorities block the jail *khal* for a supply of clay for brick-making. The *khal* is thus disconnected with the tank in Katputty, which supplies drinking and bathing water to a large locality and which, on account of its smallness, requires to be regularly replenished by the tidal flow of the *khal*. Every year, therefore, the water of the tank becomes extremely filthy and unwholesome. The attention of the District Magistrate is drawn to the matter.

(d)—*Education.*

SURHID,
Jan. 4th, 1904.

13. The *Suhrid* [Noakhali] of the 4th January says that this year three keys to Babu Chandra Nath Rakshit's "*Bijnan Path*" have appeared in the Noakhali district, but all of them are alike. Keys to many other books have also appeared in the district. These keys are full of mistakes. The attention of the educational authorities is drawn to this matter.

14. The *Sri Sri Vishnu Priya-o-Ananda Bazar Patrika* [Calcutta] of the 6th January observes that the *Sanjivani* had no right to remark that Adhar Babu has neither the education nor the capacity to write a work on Algebra. If the author had been a Brahmo, the *Sanjivani* would never have made those remarks. It insinuates that Adhar Babu is the sole arbiter of the fates of Head-masters and Principals of Government educational institutions, and that Mr. Pedler is a nonentity. This is a grave blunder on the part of the editor of the *Sanjivani*.

SRI SRI VISHNU
PRIYA-O-ANANDA
BAZAR PATRIKA,
Jan. 6th, 1904.

The *Sanjivani's* criticism of Adhar Babu's Algebra.

15. The *Mihir-o-Sudhakar* [Calcutta] of the 8th January makes the following complaints:—

MIHIR-O-SUDHAKAR,
Jan. 8th, 1904.

Disregard of the rule relating to Muhammadan holidays.

(1) The days fixed for holding the last Lower Primary Examination having fallen within the month of *Romjan*, during which Muhammadans are required to observe fasting, the Muhammadan candidates were put to serious inconvenience. The authorities should have considered this matter before fixing the dates for the examination. It is to be hoped that in future such irregularities will not be allowed to take place.

(2) The number of Muhammadan students in the Kushtia High English School is more than 100. Yet the Secretary of the school, who is a Hindu, refused to grant the *Id* holidays. The Muhammadan boys were thus compelled to telegraph to the higher authorities, and the result was that the Secretary was ordered to grant the holidays. Such regrettable disregard of Muhammadan privileges is intolerable and ought never to be permitted.

MIHIR-O-SUDHAKAR.

Wanted a Musalman Sub-Inspector of Schools for Satkhira.

16. A correspondent writing to the same paper suggests that a Muhammadan Sub-Inspector of Schools should be permanently appointed in Satkhira in the Khulna district, as the number of Muhammadan boys in the primary schools in that place is larger than that of Hindu boys. The Divisional Inspector, it is hoped, will attend to the suggestion.

(e)—*Local Self-Government and Municipal Administration.*

17. The *Pallivas* [Kalna] of the 6th January draws the attention of

PALLIVASI,
Jan. 6th, 1904.

The proposal to increase the area of the Asansol Municipality.

Government to the proposal of increasing the area of the Asansol Municipality by including certain villages within the municipal jurisdiction. The inhabitants of Rohinidibi, Sitala, Dhadhia, Ismail, Dhrubadanga and other villages are alarmed at the proposal and have submitted a petition to the Lieutenant-Governor praying that His Honour will veto the recommendation of the Commissioners. Among other grounds set forth in the petition, there is one which is the most important, viz., that all the villages are inhabited almost wholly by poor agriculturists who will derive no benefit from the Municipality. Moreover, they are quite unable to pay taxes on their houses and lands. His Honour will, it is hoped, save the poor villagers from the impending calamity.

HITAVADI,
Jan. 8th, 1904.

18. A correspondent of the *Hitavadi* [Calcutta] of the 8th January speaks of the extremely bad condition of the streets and lanes in Sahanagar within Ward No. 21 of the Calcutta Municipality. These streets and lanes, with the exception of Sahanagar Lane and Sahanagar Road, have no names of their own. Refuse accumulated in them is seldom removed. In short, the condition of the place would lead one to think that it is not within the pale of the Calcutta Municipality.

The editor remarks that all native wards under the Calcutta Corporation are in the same condition. Yet it must be acknowledged that the Municipality is improving, or its Chairman would not have been made a C. I. E. immediately after the publication of the Auditors' report on its accounts.

BANKURA DARPAH,
Jan. 8th, 1904.

19. A correspondent writes to the *Bankura Darpan* [Bankura] of the 8th January that small-pox has been raging in the Balsi village for many months. Poor people are going without any treatment. There are many tanks in the village, but the water is unfit for drinking purposes. It is to be hoped that

Small-pox in a village in the Bankura district.

the District Magistrate will see that the poor people get proper medical treatment, and that measures are taken for the prevention of the malady.

20. The *Rangalay* [Calcutta] of the 10th January writes that the Nadia

Municipality has now shared the fate of the Santipur Municipality. Farewell to the much-prized self-government! It is a great relief; let the Lord be

praised! Now, brethren, bathe in the sacred waters of the Ganges, and go home. Pay the taxes as long as you can, for you are bound to pay, and death is sure to come to your rescue.

21. Referring to the supersession of the Commissioners of the Nadia

Municipality for a period of one year, the *Prativasi*

The supersession of the Commissioners of the Nadia Municipality. [Calcutta] of the 12th January writes as follows:—

It was what Government thought to be in-

competency on their part that led, some time ago, to the supersession of the Commissioners of the Santipur Municipality in the Nadia district. To a similar reason is due the temporary removal of the Commissioners of the Nadia Municipality in the same district. In many other Municipalities, again, the non-official Chairman has been replaced by an official Chairman. All this has led to an agitation in the country.

The truth is that Government considers a Municipality incompetent—

(1) if it fails to realise the imposed taxes punctually and does not sufficiently exert itself to realise all arrears; and

(2) if it fails to carry out, on the plea of want of funds, every new reform which is incessantly proposed to it by the Sanitary and Medical Departments of the Government.

The Commissioners of the Nadia Municipality were repeatedly asked by the Government to abolish well-privies in the Nadia town and impose a latrine tax for meeting the cost of night soil removal. The Commissioners persistently refused to comply with the Government's requisition and have hence been superseded for a year. The Commissioners urged that the town was too poor to bear a latrine tax. But Government says, on the authority of Mr. Finucane, the late Commissioner of the Presidency Division, that the residents of Nadia, far from being poor, are in prosperous circumstances. As there has been a difference of opinion on this point, Government ought to have made a proper enquiry before superseding the Municipality in a hurry. Nadia is admittedly a poor place, being inhabited by Pandits and Bairagis. It is neither a place of much trade nor does it contain any zamindar residents. The question, therefore, was how to raise money enough to meet the cost of cleaning surface privies. Government, instead of coming to the aid of the Municipality with funds from the provincial revenues, asked the Commissioners to raise the money from the residents. The Commissioners pleaded their inability to do so, and, in consequence, have come to be deprived of their powers.

The Commissioners of the Nadia and other Municipalities which have allowed Government an opportunity to curtail their powers and rights must, however, know that they acted imprudently in not carrying out the orders of a powerful Government like the British Government. It is the height of folly for the educated people of this country to oppose the Government, as they are nowadays showing an increasing tendency to do. Such conduct will do more harm to themselves than to the Government.

(g)—*Railways and communications, including canals and irrigation.*

22. The *Sri Sri Vishnu Priya-o-Ananda Bazar Patrika* [Calcutta] of the 6th

A bad road in the Bankura January draws the attention of Government to the district. miserable condition of the road from the Kotalpur

thana to Saspur in the Bankura district. Though repeated representations were made to the District Board authorities during the last four or five years, the repair of the road was not taken in hand. It is proposed to construct a metalled road up to Bamare, the native village of the Vice-Chairman. But the repair of old roads is more important work than the construction of new ones. It is to be hoped that Mr. J. N. Gupta, the District Magistrate, will enquire into the matter.

23. The *Hitavadi* [Calcutta] of the 8th January publishes the following railway complaints:—

HITAVADI,
Jan. 8th, 1904.

Railway complaints. (1) Babu Rames Chandra Ghosh, Ula, speaks of the great inconvenience and hardship which are caused to passengers, and specially to females among them, by the want of platforms at the Abada station on the Bengal-Nagpur Railway.

(2) A correspondent says that at 8 P.M. the Khulna express train meets an up train at the Chandpara station on the Bengal Central Railway. The express train stands on the lines alongside the station platform, and the up train is shunted on to the next two lines and remains there even after the former has steamed off. This causes great inconvenience and hardship to the passengers of the up train.

(3) Satya Kinkar Basu, No. 231, Alu Posta (Bazar), Calcutta, says that, on the 20th November last, two baskets of cauliflowers were booked (F. No. 672) at the Patna station in the name of Mukunda Kahar, but they have not yet been received. Again, on the 14th December last, five baskets of cauliflowers belonging to Babu Kali Pada Sen were booked (Consignee No. 26626) at the Guljarbag station. The consignment was to have reached its destination on the 15th following, but it reached it on the 20th. On arrival it was found that the contents were all rotten.

(4) Mahima Chandra Maitra, Mirzapur, Basirhat Post Office, 24 Parganas, says that on the 11th December last, the driver of a third-class hackney carriage refused to take it into the Sealdah station-yard on the ground that there was a standing order prohibiting the entrance of third-class carriages into it. At the same time, a licensed cooly demanded 12 annas from the correspondent for carrying a trunk to the train by which he intended to travel. He was obliged to pay the man 8 annas because the station authorities would not allow other than licensed coolies to ply their humble trade in the station. Great is the trouble and difficulty of purchasing tickets in the station. Four or five hundred people make a violent rush into a small wooden enclosure. With great difficulty the correspondent approached the booking-clerk and gave him a rupee for two tickets to Baraset, but the latter said that he had no change with him, although an instant before he had taken 10 or 12 annas in copper from a passenger. The correspondent had to come out, change his rupee into smaller coins, make his way into the crowd again, and then bring his tickets. At the entrance into the station platform a jamadar told the correspondent that his trunk should be weighed. The jamadar was told that he was entitled to 30 seers' allowance, but to no effect. But as it was time for the train to start he had to make his way into the platform by adopting some other means.

24. A correspondent of the same paper says that the officers attached to the Chitpur, Dhapa, Garhiya, and Kidderpore toll stations in and about Calcutta commit great oppressions on the *manjis* of merchant-boats, exact

HITAVADI,

bribes from them, and often appropriate to themselves the money realised from them as tolls. The truth of this statement can be tested by verifying the accounts kept in those stations with those kept by the local *mahajans* and *arhatdars*. The toll-station officers, who receive salaries of Rs. 20 or 25 per month, manage to keep horses and carriages and even to purchase zamindaris.

BANKURA DARPAH,
Jan. 8th, 1904.

25. The *Bankura Darpan* [Bankura] of the 8th January quotes a paragraph from the *Manbhumi*, in which it is stated that the number of passengers in the train which collided with another between Sini and Gamaria on the Bengal-Nagpur Railway, was more than 1,500, and that it is not yet known how many are yet living. Government should make an enquiry and let the public know the exact number of the dead and the wounded. There should be double lines on the railway to prevent the chances of collision.

BANKURA DARPAH.

The railway collision on the Bengal-Nagpur Railway. 26. A correspondent, writing to the same paper, draws the attention of the authorities to the miserable condition of the road from Maynapur to Arsole in the Bankura district. During the rainy season the road becomes quite impassable. It requires to be thoroughly repaired and metalled.

A bad road in the Bankura district.

HOWRAH HITAISHI,
Jan. 9th, 1904.

27. The *Howrah Hitaishi* [Howrah] of the 9th January says serious accidents often take place on the Howrah-Seakhala Light Railway on account of the absence of fencing on both sides of it.

(h)—General.

DACCA PRAKASH,
Jan. 3rd, 1904.

28. The *Dacca Prakash* [Dacca] of the 3rd January (posted on a later date) says that on the 4th instant a monster meeting was held in Dacca town in order to protest against the proposed transfer. Protest meetings have also been held in the following places:—

Sinagar,	Vikrampur.
Bajrajogini,	ditto.
Sholohar,	ditto.
Hasarha,	ditto.
Baldhara,	ditto.
Bayra,	ditto.
Mymensingh town.	
Kokdahara, Mymensingh.	
Santosh,	ditto.
Sherpur,	ditto.
Bahadurpur,	ditto.

Kanihari,	Mymensingh.
Muktagacha,	ditto.
Ramgopalpur,	ditto.
Begunbarhi,	ditto.
Tangail,	ditto.
Sankrail,	ditto.
Elanga,	Tangail, Mymensingh.
Kedarpur,	ditto.
Amgram,	Madaripur, Faridpur.
Bhola,	Backergunge.
Dinajpur town.	

Ranchi town.

DACCA PRAKASH.

SUHRID,
Jan. 4th, 1904.

29. The same paper, in a long article protesting against the proposed transfer of Dacca and Mymensingh to Assam, repeats the arguments noticed before, and appeals to the inhabitants of those districts to lay their petitions before the district and divisional authorities as early as possible.

30. The *Suhrid* [Noakhali] of the 4th January writes as follows:—

The proposed transfer.

We pray Lord Curzon not to bring disgrace on the British Government by transferring the East

Bengal districts to Assam. Abolish the Indian National Congress if you have any suspicions against it, but, pray, do not drag those people who have been advancing towards light, back to darkness.

31. The *Bikas* [Barisal] of the 5th January writes as follows:—

Messrs. Garth and Savage in connection with the proposed transfer.

While the natives of Bengal are trying their utmost to prevent a transfer of Dacca and Mymensingh to Assam, Mr. Garth, the Manager of the estate of the Nabab of Dacca, is trying to get the proposed

transfer accomplished. Mr. Savage, the Commissioner of the Dacca Division, is also said to have advised some of his favourites to petition Government for a transfer of Backergunge to Assam along with Dacca and Mymensingh. Of course, Government will not act according to Mr. Savage's suggestion, but one is at a loss to make out what is his intention in making it. Mr. Garth's object is easily ascertained when one considers that that gentleman is a contractor of the Assam-Bengal Railway, carries on an extensive trade in Assam, and is, at the same time, the Nabab's Manager.

32. The *Pallivasi* [Kalna] of the 6th January writes that Government ought to grant a concession to advertisers, similar to what has been granted to proprietors of newspapers. By allowing packets or pamphlets containing advertisements, weighing not more than four *tolas*, to be sent by post with quarter-anna postage stamps, Government would increase the income of the Postal Department as well as confer a boon on advertisers.

PALLIVASI.

Jan. 6th, 1904.

33. The *Pratijna* [Calcutta] of the 6th January deprecates the proposal to transfer Dacca, Mymensingh, and Chittagong to Assam which, it says, is like a proposal to decapitate a person in order to supply a headless body with a head.

34. The *Charu Mihir* [Mymensingh] of the 5th January has the following:—

CHARU MIHIR,
Jan. 5th, 1904.

The proposed dismemberment of Bengal.

It was at an unlucky moment that Mr. Risley made this proposal for the dismemberment of Bengal. Those who bring about unnecessary revolutions in society or politics

PRATIJNA,
Jan. 6th, 1904.

are blind and wanting in foresight. The present proposal is one that gives evidence of the blindness of Government and its want of foresight. No large measure of Lord Curzon has yet produced any good result. In his time we have obtained no new rights or privileges. The Police and Universities Commissions have only created alarm and uneasiness, the proceedings of the Irrigation Commission are enveloped in darkness, the Delhi Durbar has simply resulted in waste of money. There have been changes in the north-western frontier. His Lordship has at last raised a tremendous storm among the quiet Bengal population by his proposal to dismember Bengal. The history of Lord Curzon's administration is nothing but a history of changes—changes that have filled the people with disquiet.

The present dreadful and revolutionary proposal has stirred society to its very lowest depths and produced a whirlpool which threatens to spread over all Bengal. Government has signified its intention to listen to no *artificial* agitation. But it would not be safe to conclude from this that Government will listen to *genuine* agitation. The bulk of the people are ignorant and unable to see or explain what is good or bad for them. If people could be sure that Government did everything for their good, all difficulties would be at an end. But can the Government of India lay its hand on its heart and say this? If foreign interest, however, be far more powerful in all administrative matters than the Indian interest, there is clearly a necessity for agitation.

True, the agitation which is made by the bulk of a people is genuine agitation. But the agitation which the men of light and leading in a society make for the public good should also be regarded as genuine agitation. Mass agitation in this country is difficult and may possibly prove mischievous. Its difficulty arises from the difficulty of explaining political matters to the common people. That it may prove mischievous can be seen from the extreme difficulty of turning the masses from a course which they have once taken as well as from an actual occurrence, namely, the Tala riot.

Since the publication of our last list there have been held protest meetings against the proposed dismemberment in the following places, namely:—Begunbari, Paira, Nagarbari, Kalihati, Ramgopalpur, Sarisabari, Bahadurpur, Elenga, Santos, Magra, Narayandahar, Bangla, Kasiganj, Balla, Patanganj, Porabari, Pingana, Gujadia, Suvarnakhali, Kisorganj, Khanhata, Kokdahara, Usthi, Devagram, and Banagram. There have been held altogether 33 protest meetings up to this time.

35. The *Charu Mihir* [Mymensingh] of the 6th January contains notices of the meetings held in the following places to protest against the proposed transfer:—

Dacca town.

Pingna,	Mymensingh.
Bansail,	Ditto.
Baolagram,	Ditto.
Barhabansalia,	Ditto.
Kaloha,	Ditto.

CHARU MIHIR.
Jan. 6th, 1904.

SRI SRI VISHNU.
PRIYA-O-
ANANDA BAZAR
PATRIKA.
Jan. 6th, 1904.

36. The *Sri Sri Vishnu Priya-o-Ananda Bazar Patrika* [Calcutta] of the 6th January writes:—

The proposed transfer of East Bengal to Assam.

Every one is as yet in the dark as to the real motive of Government in proposing to transfer East Bengal to Assam. It is clear to the dullest intellect that the arguments advanced by Government in justification of the proposed changes are ridiculous. That Government is in the habit of making a secret of its real motives in many matters is well known. Who is then to blame, except Government, if what are given as the real reasons are not accepted as such by the suspecting public? We enumerate below the various surmises that have been made regarding the true object of the proposed change:—

- (1) Government intends to weaken the national bond of the people of Bengal.
- (2) With a view to develop Assam, Government proposes to lower Dacca, Mymensingh, and Chittagong.
- (3) It is incredible that Government is serious in its proposal to transfer Dacca and Mymensingh to Assam. The proposal is intended merely to divert public attention from some important agitation.

(4) The English are very restless. When they have nothing serious to do, they, like some meddlesome lad, play mischievous pranks, regardless of what may be the effects thereof on other persons. The present is only an illustration of this fact.

(5) Lord Curzon is over-anxious to render his name immortal, and he is probably seeking to serve his purpose by this means.

(6) Lord Curzon proposes to make the North-Eastern frontier as compact and solid as the North-Western.

(7) Lord Curzon is very fond of making changes. He loves to see the old order change, giving place to new. "Something new" is his motto.

SRI SRI VISHNU
PRIYA-O-
ANANDA BAZAR
PATRIKA,
Jan. 6th 1904.

SRI SRI VISHNU
PRIYA-O-
ANANDA BAZAR
PATRIKA.

SANJIVANI,
Jan. 7th, 1904.

37. The same paper writes:—

Except a few Government officers, none among the Bengalis has this year had the good fortune to win a Government title. Those who burned with the desire of winning Rajaships and had spent large sums with that object, have been sorely disappointed. But they need not despair, for perseverance and strenuous endeavours are never thrown away. Let them try again and spend money again! The distinction bestowed upon Mr. Gokhale and that upon Babu Dwarkanath Mitra were well-deserved. How is it that Government is so unkind towards non-official Bengali gentlemen in the matter of conferring titles? However, we shall be very happy indeed to see our countrymen learn a wholesome lesson from what they have just experienced.

38. The same paper writes that the inhabitants of Sibsagar residing at

The rumoured transfer of the
district head-quarters from Sib-
sagar to Jorehat in Assam.

Dibrugarh are greatly upset by the rumour that the district head-quarters will be removed from Sibsagar to Jorehat. It is said the Chief Commissioner of Assam has made this proposal to the

Hon'ble Sir Denzil Ibbetson. Government should not treat the people of this country just as slave-owners used to treat their slaves. The British Government is all-powerful; and the people, although helpless and meek, are yet human beings and understand what conduces to their comfort and convenience. The rulers, therefore, when making such changes as above, should consult them.

39. The *Sanjivani* [Calcutta] of the 7th January writes:—

The substance of the fourth argument of The proposed territorial changes. Government in favour of the proposed transfer is that as a result of the imperfectly supervised administration in the eastern outlying districts, police oppression and crime are much greater in them than in the other districts of Bengal. Now, if the police had really been more oppressive in Dacca and Mymensingh, it would have necessarily received the greater number of punishments, and if it had really been less efficient than the police in other districts, crime would have been more frequent in those two districts. But it appears from the Bengal Administration Report for 1901-1902 that punishments inflicted on police officers and the amount of crime, in Dacca and Mymensingh are, as a matter of fact, less than what they are in Burdwan, Murshidabad, the 24-Parganas, etc. Police oppression and crime therefore, are greater near Belvedere than in places far removed from it. Is not Mr. Risley's remark that "there is no portion of Bengal where the drawbacks of an imperfectly supervised administration are more evident than in these outlying districts" entirely groundless?

How disastrous must be the consequences of the proposed transfer of Dacca and Mymensingh to Assam! Laws and regulations for Assam are made, first, by the Viceregal Legislative Council; secondly, by extending to it the laws in force in other provinces by notification in the *Gazette of India*; thirdly, by secret conference of the Chief Commissioner with the Governor-General. To make laws for a province without the concurrence of its representative in the Council is indeed terrible; far more terrible it is to introduce into it the laws of other provinces; and the climax is reached when laws are the result of a secret conference. The Sylhet Jhum Regulations of 1893 were passed by notification in the *Gazette of India*. The people of Sylhet had no knowledge of the passing of the Regulations. The zamindars and talukdars

were aghast at finding their lands taken possession of by Government. What guarantee is there that by a simple notification in the Gazette the Permanent Settlement in the transferred districts may not be withdrawn? Why should Dacca be transferred to a non-regulation province? No Bengali would be willing to pass under the Government of a province where people on waking in the morning find laws enforced which were passed without their knowledge.

40. The same paper says that Lord Curzon has himself done great injury

The future of the port of Calcutta. to the port of Chittagong by opening the railway line from Gauhati to Dibrugarh and by joining Dhubri with Gauhati. Merchandise from Dibrugarh

will now be imported into Calcutta and not into Chittagong. Lord Curzon has said that it was a mistake to construct the Assam-Bengal Railway. To correct this mistake, it will be necessary to direct the trade of Assam towards Chittagong. But this cannot fail to injure the trade of Calcutta. If all the goods from the northern districts be imported into Chittagong, Calcutta must suffer heavily.

41. The same paper publishes telegrams of protest meetings held in the following places:—

The proposed transfer of East Bengal to Assam. *Dacca*.—Baira, Bajrajogini, Lohajung, Hasara, Ichhapura, Manikganj, Sabbar, Bajrajogini, Shivalaya, Outsahi, Srinagar, Shekhanagore, Dacca, Malkhanagore, Gaodia, Jainshar, Baldha, Munshiganj, Araibazar, Narainganj, Kashimpur, Suapur.

Mymensingh.—Muktagacha, Mymensingh, Sherpur, Balla, Sankrail, Pora-bari, Subarnakhali, Kushmail, Pingna, Karimganj, Kishoreganj, Gauripur, Tangail, Karatiga, Netrakona, Gopalpur, Kalihati, Iswarganj, Jogendranagar, Dhanikhola, Kathiadi.

Faridpur.—Amgram.

Tippera.—Comilla.

Noakhali.—Feni.

42. Referring to the proposed transfer, the *Jyoti* [Chittagong] of the 7th January writes as follows:—

The proposed transfer. People believe that changes and reforms made by the English in India are never favourable to a healthy development of the national life of the country, and they are not much mistaken in this belief. They, therefore, look on every proposal of change with a suspicious eye.

Assam has a backward administration, and the almost daily occurrence of executive and judicial scandals under it proves that its interior is entirely rotten. If it is desired to confer a benefit on us Chittagong people and Assam, why not transfer Assam to Bengal? Indeed, during the whole of the Muhammadan period and during the first century of British rule in India Bengal, Bihar, Orissa, and Assam were under one ruler. But instead of transferring Assam to Bengal Government is going to transfer us to Assam. We Bengalis were the first subjects of the British Government in India, and it is a suicidal policy to deprive us of our rights and privileges by one stroke of the pen.

Mr. Risley has, in his first letter, said:—

"No temporary opposition in the transferred towns or areas, no artificial agitation or interested outcry, should, in their opinion, be permitted to divert the efforts of Government from the main object, viz., the erection of Assam into a vigorous and self-contained administration, capable of playing the same part in the North East Frontier of India that the Central Provinces have done in the centre, and that the Punjab formerly did on the North West."

This shows that Government has a hidden motive for desiring to transfer the important East Bengal districts to Assam.

If it is desired to strengthen the north-eastern frontier of Assam, that can be done by strengthening and fortifying Burmah and the hilly regions between Siam and Assam.

Many high officials are reported to have said that Lord Curzon is determined to bring about the proposed transfer in spite of all opposition. It is also rumoured that the Commissioner of the Dacca Division and some other officials have proposed a transfer of the entire Dacca Division to Assam.

A correspondent of the *Englishman* newspaper of the 30th December says:—

"I would suggest that a statement be published saying that the amalgamation is to take place on a certain date, sufficient time being given to hear objections, that the laws are to

SANJIVANI.
Jan. 7th 1904.

SANJIVANI.

Jyoti,
Jan. 7th, 1904.

remain unaltered, that the Chief Commissionership will be made into a Lieutenant-Governorship, with a seat on the Viceroy's Council, and that the capital will be Chittagong with a residence in Dacca, and Shillong, the hill station, to be used as the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal uses Darjeeling."

Let Government follow the correspondent's advice if they are determined to bring about the proposed transfer, else the cloud of popular discontent will assume such a dangerous magnitude as will darken the whole political sky of India.

JOTIL.
Jan. 7th, 1904.

HITAVADI.
Jan. 8th, 1904.

HITAVADI.

43. A correspondent of the same paper complains of the extreme irregularity in the distribution of letters, etc., within the jurisdiction of the Rathhidang post office in the Arakan district. People going to the post office for getting letters registered or for making money-orders often find nobody there to attend to them.

44. The *Hitavadi* [Calcutta] of the 8th January says that the monopoly of titles, which white officials have all along been enjoying, has been continued in the last Honours List also. The Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale has received, as members of the Imperial Council generally receive, the title of C.I.E. We are at a loss to make out how or why Mr. Greer, under whose *regime* the Calcutta Municipality has deteriorated in many respects, has been made a C.I.E. The honour done to Babu Dwarka Nath Mitra, retired District and Sessions Judge, has done scant justice to his merits. It is a regret that many title-hunters have been sorely disappointed by the Honours List, but that cannot be helped.

45. Referring to the proposed transfer, the same paper writes as follows:—

The proposed transfer.

Mr. Risley's proposal has created a panic and raised an agitation of such intensity and magnitude as have seldom been known in East Bengal. Protest meetings are being held in every town and in every big village. It is madness to try to explain away such an universal agitation by describing it as the creation of a number of professional agitators.

The argument that "the Government of India have reason to believe—and their impressions were strongly confirmed by the enquiries of the Police Commission—that there is no portion of Bengal where the drawbacks of an imperfectly supervised administration are more evident than in these outlying districts on its eastern border" is not borne out by facts. As a matter of fact, it is in Faridpur and Backergunge, and not in Dacca and Mymensingh, that crime prevails so largely. Again, if imperfect supervision on the part of the Lieutenant-Governor gives rise to maladministration, then the divisional and district officers in Bengal must be either unfit for the work they have to do or negligent of the duties they ought to perform. And if such be the case, the appointment of a better set of men will remove all difficulties.

What we believe is that the real intention of the Government of India is not to relieve the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal of a portion of the heavy burden now imposed upon him and improve the efficiency of the administration of East Bengal, but to enrich Assam and raise the position and prestige of its ruler. Government may, if it desires, take some of Bengal's money in order to maintain Civilians in Assam. But as that would not look well, Government is trying to gain the same purpose by adopting a crooked policy. However that may be, we cannot approve of a policy which sanctions the robbing of Peter to pay Paul.

HITAVADI.

46. The same paper says that under paragraphs B and C of Circular No. 97 of 1891, published in the Postal Manual,

Grievances of postal signallers. Part V, page 485, postal officers who also know signalling may be promoted to every third vacancy of Rs. 50 or Rs. 60, and apprentices in the Postal Department may be made permanent in every third vacancy. But in practice this rule is not followed. If the rule be enforced, the promotions of postal officers who possess a knowledge of signalling need in no way be hampered. But nowadays many high officers in the department act under the impression that such men should not be appointed to post offices in which there are no telegraph offices and thus hamper their promotion. But General Order No. 7, issued by the Director-General of the Post Office on 12th August 1903, fails to justify such an impression on the part of those officers. The post-masters of many post offices in which telegraphic work is done do not know signalling, and that work is done by newly appointed

signallers on Rs. 15 each. This arrangement is faulty, because if the signaller falls ill or the telegraphic instruments are out of order, the telegraphic work is brought to a standstill. To remedy this evil and encourage signallers, the more experienced among them should be appointed as post-masters in combined offices.

47. The *Howrah Hitaishi* [Howrah] of the 9th January writes that

A postal complaint. though not less than twenty villages are served

by the Maju post office in the Howrah district, yet

there is only one postal peon attached to the post office. As a consequence, letters and newspapers are not regularly delivered, and post-cards, envelopes, and postage stamps are not easily procurable. The postal authorities will, it is hoped, remove the inconvenience of the villagers.

48. The *Basumati* [Calcutta] of the 9th January publishes reports of

meetings held or to be held in the following places

Protest meetings. to protest against the proposed transfer:—

Lenshajang, Sankrail, Porabari, Mymensingh, Pingna, Karimganj, Subarnakhali, Kishorganj, Bajrajogini, Tangail, Dinajpur, Netrakona, Magra, Bayra, Muktagachha, and Sherpur.

49. The *Bangavasi* [Calcutta] of the 9th January writes as follows:—

"Slowly and slowly." We have more than once shown that attempts

are being made slowly to circumscribe and

confine the powers of the *Mohant* of the Budh-Gaya temple, and that the strong arguments which are being brought forward by him in support of his position are being rejected by the authorities. And it is the belief of the entire Hindu community that the authorities are following a policy of partiality in the arrangements which they are making for establishing *dharmasalas* at Budh-Gaya. Government and the District Board of Gaya have rejected every one of the *Mohant's* prayers and accepted every one of Dharmapal's demands in the matter.

50. The same paper has received telegraphic news of innumerable

The proposed transfer. meetings held throughout the country to protest

against the proposed transfer of Dacca, Mymensingh, and Chittagong to Assam.

51. The *Nava Yug* [Calcutta] of the 9th January complains of the

Partiality to Musalmans in the public service.

partiality which Government is nowadays showing to Musalmans, at the expense of Hindus, in the matter of giving employment in almost all public

departments. The Registration Department, for instance, has almost become a monopoly of Musalmans. Preference is also being given to Musalmans in the Subordinate Educational Service, for whenever a vacancy occurs in the post of a Sub-Inspector of Schools or Inspecting Pandit, preference is given to some Musalman candidate. Taking the Judicial service, the Calcutta Small Cause Court contains two Musalman Judges, but not one Hindu Judge. The Calcutta Police Court has not seen a Hindu Magistrate since the days of Mr. B. L. Gupta, the post of the Northern Division Presidency Magistrate having ever since been filled by a Musalman Magistrate. And only recently Maulvi Razlul Karim, a Deputy Magistrate, has been appointed a Presidency Magistrate for Calcutta in supersession of the claims of abler Hindu Deputy Magistrates who are also senior to him. Had not Babus Gosain Das Dutta, Gopal Chandra Mukherji, and Chandra Narayan Gupta a better claim to the new Presidency Magistracy than Maulvi Buzlul Karim?

52. The same paper says that the proposal to transfer a portion of

A public alarm. Bengal to Assam, the conversion of the Calcutta

Presidency Magistrate's Court almost into a District

Magistrate's Court, and the proposal to establish a Civil District Court in Calcutta, which will have the effect of superseding the Original Side of the Calcutta High Court, have, along with the rumour that the summer headquarters of the Bengal Government will be removed from Darjeeling to Hazaribagh, created an alarm in the public mind that the Government of India intends removing its capital from Calcutta. Some people are saying that the cost that such a change will entail will be too great for the Government to undertake. But they are mistaken. If the Government has set its heart on removing the metropolis from Calcutta, it will carry out its project,

HOWRAH HITAISHI.

Jan. 9th, 1904.

BASUMATI,

Jan. 9th, 1904.

BANGAVASI,

Jan. 9th, 1904.

BANGAVASI.

NAVAYUG,

Jan. 9th, 1904.

NAVAYUG.

no matter what it may cost to the rate-payer to do so. Calcutta has been the metropolis of India because it has been a great centre of trade and commerce. With the raising of Chittagong to the position of a large port, it is not idle to suppose that Calcutta may lose its importance as a commercial centre.

RANGALAY,
Jan. 10th, 1904.

52. The *Rangalay* [Calcutta] of the 10th January writes that Government

titles.

Government is very unwilling to confer titles upon deserving Indians. At the Delhi Darbar, titles were

showered upon editors of Anglo-Indian newspapers. But such a deserving and highly respected Bengali editor as Babu Narendra Nath Sen was passed over. Is he inferior to anybody in social status and respectability? Take other instances. Babu Damodar Das Barman, zamindar, Mr. Justice Gurudas Banerji, Babu Kali Krista Tagore, Babu Surendra Nath Banerjee, Babu Nagendra Nath Ghose, Babu Ananda Mohun Bose are all without titles. If such men are not honoured, what must be the value of titles? Is not Lord Curzon proud of being an *impartial* administrator?

RANGALAY.

53. The same paper has the following :—

The proposed transfer of East Bengal to Assam. Meetings are being held all over East Bengal to protest against the proposal to transfer it to Assam. All classes of people have joined these

meetings and consternation prevails everywhere in consequence of the proposal. It must be remembered that these are not got-up meetings giving vent to interested outcries. East Bengal is really unwilling to part with Bengal proper. Government places implicit reliance upon police reports and is often led into error in consequence. We wish to impress upon Government the genuine character of the present agitation. Dacca, Mymensingh, and Tippera are in all respects inseparably connected with other parts of Bengal. Government has tried to show that these districts will gain valuable advantages by the proposed transfer, that Dacca will become the capital town of the new province, and that the people of the Dacca district will be able to secure important appointments under the Government. These honeyed words can only delude children. But the Bengalis are not to be deceived by them. We are believers in the caste system. The inhabitants of East Bengal will be outcasted by the proposed transfer to Assam. Once outcasted, the Bengalis will be ruined for ever. If we are thus forcibly outcasted, we must say that the English are greater masters of the art of destroying caste than even the Muhammadans were. We hear that two zamindars, one of Dacca and the other of Chittagong, are trying their utmost to help Government in this matter. This is not to be wondered at; for, we have ourselves been always our worst enemies.

CHARU MIHIR,
Jan. 10th, 1904.

54. Referring to the proposed transfer, the *Charu Mihir* [Mymensingh] of the 10th January writes as follows :—

The proposed transfer.

Lord Curzon is not heartless; who has then created this danger for Bengal? If it is Mr. Risley, what is his object in creating it? Who can doubt that his proposal has created aching and discontent in the heart of every Bengali? The Bengalis have all along calmly borne their sufferings, but the present danger has quite upset them. That Bengal is greatly suffering at present is admitted by every right-thinking man. Even the octogenarian Maharaja Sir Jatindra Mohan Tagore has felt the suffering keenly. We do not believe that Mr. Risley does not realise this mental anguish of the Bengalis. Would Lord Curzon forget his own responsibility and allow himself to be deceived by another man? That is not possible. If the Bengalis had had no faith in the greatness of His Excellency's mind, they would not have raised a fierce and widespread agitation against the proposal. The last hope of every one rests on the fact that His Excellency is not cruel and heartless. He is not at the helm of Government for the purpose of creating discontent in the country. The Lieutenant-Governor is said to be a devout Christian and a man of piety. Would he support Mr. Risley's proposal after what he has been seeing around him? Between conscience on one side and the desire of his superiors on the other, His Honour is in a great dilemma. Under similar circumstances many high-minded rulers have safeguarded the interests of the ruled. We shall hope that His Honour will follow in their footsteps. And strengthened by this hope we shall raise an agitation, the voice of which

will be heard through Bengal, and which will allow neither the Lieutenant-Governor nor the Viceroy to remain indifferent to the matter.

55. The same paper devotes its entire first editorial column to publishing "A call." the following sentence in bold type:—

The mother-country calls, "With a hopeful heart, and with one voice soon make your objections known to the kind-hearted Lieutenant-Governor."

56. The same paper gives the names of many of the sympathisers, mostly Rajas and zamindars, of the protest movement The protest movement. against the proposed transfer.

57. The same paper publishes the following open letter in English:—

AN OPEN LETTER TO W. B. THOMSON, Esq., I.C.S., DISTRICT MAGISTRATE, MYMENSINGH.

I.—INTRODUCTION.

SIR,—During the short time you have been at the head of the administration of this district, you have endeared yourself to all classes of the people; and now that they are in the throes of a death struggle, they look up to you, if not for succour and help which may be beyond your power, to at least faithfully represent their views to those in whose hands lies their ultimate destiny. You must have noticed how a single stroke of the pen of Mr. Risley has suddenly thrown millions of people into convulsions, hitherto living in perfect peace and contentment, and how vast sums of money that might have been utilised in a better cause, are being spent by them in their wild despair to avert the disaster with which they are threatened. The people of this district have sufficient faith in your understanding and integrity not to apprehend that you will simply endorse the verdict so confidently anticipated by Mr. Risley that the agitation that has been set on foot against his pet measure is all artificial and interested. You may, Sir, ask the oldest of your own subordinates in whom you place confidence whether within their memory they have ever seen or heard a titled or big zamindar open his mouth against a measure proposed by Government, however inwardly he resented it. But if you defer your judgment till the 17th instant next, you will with your own eyes see a spectacle never seen before in this district, the spectacle of the biggest and titled zamindars for once issuing out of their voluntary seclusion to join their voices with those of the people in denouncing this odious and obnoxious measure. You may also inquire whether any measure of Government or any proposal has within living memory stirred the feelings of the people of this district so deeply as the one launched by Mr. Risley. It is not complimentary to a Government that the people should entertain the idea that it is not only capable of ignoring their feelings and cherished associations, but of ridiculing them by anticipation, and what does Mr. Risley mean by suggesting that any outcry that might be raised against his proposed measure would be interested? We do not deny that our cry is interested, but, on the contrary, think that that is its greatest merit. We cry because we think that our interests will be seriously affected, and we maintain that unless the Government be regardless of our interests, which it has no right to be, it should at once withdraw its proposal and leave us in peace. It is, Sir, not a question of sentiment with us, as some people imagine. Sentiment is, after all, a hazy consciousness of undefined interests; and so long as the people had, owing to the suddenness of the announcement, not time enough to realize the gravity of the interests involved, they only felt that it was an utterly odious and distasteful proposal. But now, the more we think about it, the more we realize the mischiefs attendant on it. Enough is suggested in the resolution of Government to show that the proposed measure will be beneficial to Assam; but there is absolutely no intelligent suggestion that it will be beneficial to the districts proposed to be added to it, and specially the two districts, Dacca and Mymensingh. The only suggestion put forth is that they will receive more attention from the chief ruler than, owing to their outlying position, they have hitherto done. But are they—specially the two districts of Dacca and Mymensingh—more outlying than most of the districts of Orissa and Bihar? As a matter of fact, they have been receiving more attention of the

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chief ruler than the majority of the districts in Bengal, and Dacca on more than one occasion been found convenient enough for a visit even from the highest ruler of the land. Organized as the whole Bengal administration is, the efficiency of a local administration depends not on its chief ruler, but on its local officers. Have they pointed out in what respects the districts of Dacca and Mymensingh are less efficiently managed than Hooghly or Burdwan? As regards commercial prosperity, no administrative change can affect it, and supposing it does, it can only affect it for the better, if the change be from a lower to a higher administration; and it will affect it for the worse, if the change be in the opposite direction. The improvement of communication between Bengal and Assam will certainly be beneficial to both, but it is difficult to see how any administrative change is necessary for the purpose, and why some few districts of Bengal should suffer an administrative reverse for the prosperity of the trade of both Bengal and Assam. Lastly, let us consider the ethical ground suggested in the Government Resolution, i.e., that these districts should be wedded to Assam in order that the latter may benefit by the companionship. Now, we have hitherto learnt that the interests of an individual or a class should, if necessary, be sacrificed for the good of the community, on the obvious ground that what the individual or class loses in one respect, it gains in another. But whoever has heard of the interests of a whole people being wantonly sacrificed for the benefit of another without the prospect of any return in any shape whatever? We contend that the Government is morally wrong in depriving a section of the people of a political status to which it has attained in common with their fellow-brethren. It is said that Sylhet has accepted its fate and ceased to grumble, and it has even been hinted that it has so far acquiesced in the change that it will probably grumble on being retransferred to Bengal. This is how our rulers care to ascertain popular feelings. The man whom you lead to the gallows also accepts his fate, because he knows that it will be of no use to grumble, but that gives you no right to say that he will grumble at being saved from the gallows. Have they given Sylhet a better administration, better Judges and Magistrates, better police or better education? Would they give Sylhet the option of choosing between Bengal and Assam? Arguments such as these deceive nobody, nor do they enhance the reputation of those advancing them. And what is Sylhet after all? Is there no difference between Sylhet and Dacca and Mymensingh? Would the case of Sylhet be adduced as a reason for depriving Bengal of its Lieutenant-Governor and Legislative Council and placing it under a Chief Commissioner with powers to make laws in secret? The people of Dacca and Mymensingh have a right to say that they are as advanced as the people of West Bengal and must continue to share with them the same political status as they have shared in the past, no matter whether Sylhet is content or not with an inferior political status.

You cannot, Sir, deny the fact that the political status of Assam is much lower than that of Bengal. You should not also forget that Government would not have conferred this superior political status on Bengal unless Bengal deserved it. And you should further remember that this status was obtained after years of hard constitutional struggle, and that in that struggle the people of Dacca and Mymensingh took a leading, if not the most prominent, part. It is now for you to say whether the people of these two districts should now be deprived of that status for no fault of theirs, or whether the agitation that they have started is genuine or artificial. Ever since 1833, for a period of 70 years, they have never known what law-making in secret is like, and the present generation have enjoyed the privilege of a legislative council as their birth-right. Under a settled government and an enlightened public opinion, they have been regarding executive high-handedness as practically a thing of the past, or, wherever occurring, as immediately remediable. The separation of the executive and judicial functions has been the dream of Bengal for decades of years, and, by the combined efforts of the people of West and East Bengal, brought within the sphere of possible accomplishment. Even as the law at present stands regarding most of the higher offences, it makes it impossible for the Government, so far as Bengal is concerned, to vest the executive with final judicial powers. Not so in Assam. These are but a few instances of the political status which the people of Dacca and

Mymensingh enjoy and value, and with which are bound their future hopes and aspirations. It is for you to consider whether Government has any right to deprive the people of these ill-fated districts of their status, under which they were born and which they consider as their birth-right. Besides the question of political status, there are other questions involved in the proposed change. It is the keen competition which the people of Dacca and Mymensingh have to maintain with the people of West Bengal, no less than their association with them, that accounts for the progress they have hitherto made. The withdrawal of that competition and association cannot but retard their further progress. Then, again, in respect of their admission into the public service, on which the middle class principally depend, they entertain a serious apprehension. If they are transferred to Assam, they will be cut off from the Bengal service, and so far as Assam proper is concerned, their superior intelligence and education will prove to be their curse. The backward people of Assam must be given preference over the Bengalis, so that the latter will be excluded both from Bengal and Assam proper. In fact, the people of these two districts will be literally doomed.

You are, sir, the mouthpiece and representative of the people placed under your charge, and you have a duty to perform towards them. Enough, I believe, has been laid before you to form your own conclusion as to what that duty is. More in my next.

III.—LEGISLATION.

58. The *Burdwan Sanjivani* [Burdwan] of the 5th January writes as follows:—

The Universities Bill.

BURDWAN SANJIVANI,
Jan 5th. 1904.

We are no advocates of the system of education which has made us forget our religious practices, which has done away with caste, and destroyed the arts of the country. Let His Excellency Lord Curzon withdraw this University education and substitute for it a system which enables English youths to learn business and trade. Let His Excellency provide us such education without making any race distinctions as may enable us to learn useful arts, such as making glassware, etc.

The present system of University education has produced young men versed in languages. They expect to have the same advantages now as were enjoyed by their predecessors in the time of Lord Clive and Warren Hastings. How mistaken they are! The ancient days are no more! The modern rulers are very partial to their kith and kin.

It has been insinuated that with a view to provide a larger number of appointments for Europeans and Eurasians, Lord Curzon is bent upon restricting University education among the natives. Such criticism of his actions is ungenerous and worthless. We hope His Excellency will give us such education as may best promote our true interests.

VI.—MISCELLANEOUS.

59. Referring to the last meeting of the Indian National Congress, the *Basumatî* [Calcutta] of the 9th January asks, "How

The Indian National Congress.

BASUMATI,
Jan. 9th, 1904.

long will this child's play continue?" Even 19 years' speechification has failed to convince the public that there is any possibility of the Congress being able to do any good to the country. At first the Congress disturbed the equanimity of the authorities and even alarmed them a little. But now they look at it with a supreme and generous contempt, satisfied that the danger which it was feared it was is not real but imaginary. Now the Congress is floating on the surface of the ocean of time as an insignificant bubble.

We have more than once said, and we say again, that we are friends and not enemies of the Congress, but we have no desire to convene large meetings in order to establish our poverty before the world's eyes. If the large amount of money, which has been squandered on the Congress during the last 19 years, had been devoted to practical purposes, some benefit would have been reaped from it. We all say "work," "work," but none of us does any "work." We only speechify—speechify here, speechify there, and speechify everywhere.

URIYA PAPERS.

URIYA AND NAVA-
SAMVAD,
Dec. 30th, 1903.

UTKALDIPHIKA,
Jan. 2nd, 1904.

60. The *Uriya and Navasamvad* [Balasore] of the 30th December reports that small-pox has appeared in Balasore, and that up to date three or four cases have ended fatally.

The Chairman of the local Municipality has taken timely precaution, and necessary measures have been adopted to keep the town clean, to vaccinate all the members of a family in which the disease has appeared, and to burn the bedding, &c., of the patients, pecuniary assistance being given in the case of poor men from the municipal funds.

61. A Conference of the Uriya-speaking inhabitants was held in the Cuttack town, says the *Utkaldipika* [Cuttack] of

The Utkal Sammilani

2nd January, on the 30th and 31st December

last. It was very largely attend by members of almost all classes, i.e., Maharajas, Rajas, zamindars, traders, Government servants, and others. About 2,000 persons were present at the meeting, of whom 10 were delegates from Midnapore, 25 from Sambalpore, and 300 from Ganjam. The rest were residents of Cuttack, Balasore, Puri, and the Garjats. The meeting was presided over by the Maharaja of Mohurbhunj, who delivered a long speech in Uriya. In his speech the President said that the object of the meeting was to establish friendly relations among the people residing in the Uriya-speaking tracts, to increase the wealth of the country by improving industries, &c., and, thirdly, to spread education among the people. It was observed that discussion on matters concerning politics and religion had been prudently excluded from the programme. The former, he said, was not necessary because the country was enjoying peace under the benign British administration, and, as regards the latter, there was truth in every religion, and it was not proper that one should find fault with the faith of another. The President called attention to the fact that under the British rule the Indians, though professing different religions, live together peacefully. He then dwelt upon the measures to be adopted for improving education, industry, and agriculture, and the reforms to be made in the social manners and customs of the country.

The following resolutions were then proposed and carried unanimously:—

1st.—That cordial thanks be given to His Excellency the Governor-General in Council for his beneficial proposal to unite together all the Uriya-speaking peoples under one Government.

This was moved by the Maharaja of Keonjhur, seconded by the Raja of Khalicote, and supported by Babu Biswanath Kar, Raja Baikunth Nath Dey, Bahadur, and Babu Braja Mohan Patnaik, of Sambalpur.

2nd.—That cordial thanks be given to His Honour the present Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal for his reintroducing the Uriya language in the Courts of Sambalpur.

This was proposed by Bikram Deva Barma, of Vizagapatam, seconded by Babu Chandra Shekhar Behera, of Sambalpur, and supported by Ramchandra Das, of Puri, and Babu Gagan Behari Chaudhuri, B.L., of Balasore.

3rd.—That the necessity for the preservation and improvement of friendly relations with the other nations with whom the *Utkalijas* have come in contact should be recognized.

This was proposed by Raja Baikunth Nath De, Bahadur, seconded by Babus M. R. Roy, and Rajgopal Achari Rajguru, of Manjusa, and supported by Babu Radhanath Pati, B.L., of Midnapore, Babu Ram Narayan Misra, M.A., B.L., of Sambalpur, the Revd. A. H. Young, and Babu Madhusudan Das, vakil. The last two gentlemen delivered very interesting and elegant speeches in support of the proposal.

4th.—That the Conference admit the necessity of constituting a permanent Committee for inducing the people to adopt necessary means for the promotion of needful social reforms.

This was proposed by Munshi Muhammad Ali and seconded by Babu Daniel Mahanti, of Berhampore.

5th.—That the Conference feel the necessity for hearty co-operation for the improvement of the Uriya language and literature and the formation of a permanent Committee for the purpose, with which the existing *Utkal Sahitya Samaja* should be amalgamated.

This was moved by Rai Radhanath Rai, Bahadur, seconded by Babu Madhusudan Rao, and supported by Babu Gopal Ballav Das and Babu Gangadhar Meher, of Sambalpur.

6th.—That a permanent Committee be formed to devise means for improving the agriculture, industry, &c., of the Uriyas, and that arrangements be made for opening an Exhibition in connection with the Conference every year, and that the *Utkal Silponnati Sabha* be amalgamated with the Conference.

This was moved by the Raja of Talcher, seconded by Babu Krishnachandra Palit, and supported by Babus Sarat Chandra Mukherji and Madhusudan Das.

7th.—That a permanent Committee be formed to devise means for helping poor students and for sending out educated young men to foreign countries to learn arts, &c., and that the Committee so formed be empowered to form branch Committees in different localities.

Moved by Babu Gokulanand Chaudhuri, seconded by Sripati Misra, of Sambalpur, and supported by Babu Harihar Panda, B.A., of Aska, Babu Gouri Sankar Ray, and Babu Mayadhar Das.

8th.—That thanks be given to the boys who served the Conference as volunteers and performed their duties with self-sacrifice, assiduity, and zeal.

This was proposed by the President and seconded by Babu Madhusudan Rao.

9th.—That thanks be given to the guests who attended the Conference.

Proposed by Babu Nemai Charan Mitra and seconded by Babu Gokulanand Chaudhury.

10th.—That the next meeting of the Conference be held in the town of Cuttack, and that a Committee be formed, consisting of the present Executive Committee and others, to perform the duties connected with every branch of the Conference.

This was proposed by the Raja of Talcher and seconded by Babu Harish Chandra Ghosh, B.L., of Puri.

11th.—That thanks be given to the President.

Proposed by the Raja of Talcher, seconded by Babu Gauri Sankar Ray, and supported by Babu Abhiram Bhunja.

The meeting then dissolved, after three cheers to His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal.

62. The same paper says that some Kabulis are selling winter clothes on credit to the ignorant people at Jajpur at $1\frac{1}{2}$ times or twice the actual price, on condition that the money must be paid in *Phalgun* next.

Some improvident men are purchasing the articles at a price which, considering their pecuniary circumstances they can ill-afford to pay, but as was seen once before, they must feel the consequence when the Kabulis, with long sticks on their shoulders, will come to their door in the ensuing *Phalgun* to realise the price.

UTKALDIPKA
Jan, 2nd, 1904.

NARAYAN CHANDRA BHATTACHARYYA,

Bengali Translator.

BENGALI TRANSLATOR'S OFFICE,
The 16th January, 1904.

